

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly amend claims 3-7, 9-12, 14-15, 18-20 and 22 under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.121(b) by deleting the bracketed subject matter and inserting the underlined material:

a<sup>1</sup>  
003240" 9420556  
3. (amended) Process according to claim[s] 1[-2] wherein the membranes have spiral wound modules with spacing in the range 30-120 mil.

4. (amended) Process according to claim[s] 1[-2] wherein the membranes have spiral wound modules with spacing in the range 30-90 mil.

5. (amended) Process according to claim[s] 1[-2] wherein the membranes have spiral wound modules with spacing in the range 40-50 mil.

6. (amended) Process according to claim[s] 1[-5] wherein the extraction is carried out with water at temperature 90° - 115°C and at pressure  $P=0-3 \cdot 10^{-1}$  MPa, the pH of water being comprised between 1,5 and 6 and an efficaceous mutual movement between the solid and the solvent being provided.

7. (amended) Process according to claim[s] 1[-6] wherein the extraction is carried out in a closed cycle with at least one extractor, the tannin solution being collected at the bottom of the extractor and being recycled, at least once, to the tope of the extractor or, in case of more than one extractor, to the top of the next extractor.

a<sup>2</sup>  
9. (amended) Process according to claim[s] 1[-8] wherein the percolation solvent flows parallel to the main axis of the extractor, going in contact with the solid material with water and/or steam jets directed from

top to bottom and/or from bottom to top of the extractor.

10. (amended) Process, according to [any of the claim[s] 1[-9] wherein the length of the extraction cycle is 3-4 hours.

11. (amended) Process according to [any of the previous claims] claim 1 wherein the solvent is sent to the solid [material] product in a turbulent manner.

12. (amended) Process according to [any of the previous claims] claim 1 further comprising: a flotation/sedimentation stage, a filtration stage, a possible intermediate storage, from which the tannin solution is drawn to be nanofiltered at least once.

14. (amended) Process according to [the previous claims] claims 1 wherein the nanofiltration is carried out at  $P = 3.5 - 4.0 \text{ MPa}$  and  $T = 50 - 70^\circ\text{C}$ .

15. Process according to [the previous claims] claim 1 wherein the water outgoing the nanofiltration step is recycled as solvent to the extraction unit.

18. (amended) Plant according to claim [17] 16 wherein the nanofiltration unit comprises at least one spiral wound membrane with 30-120 mil spacing.

19. (amended) Plant according to claim[s] 16 [-18] wherein the extractor is a cylindrical vessel with the bottom in the shape of frustum of cone, on top of said extractor being positioned a charging hopper and a valve; inside the extractor being positioned at least a device to move the solid; the water and/or the steam for percolation are sent to the solid material in a turbulent manner by a device provided with sprayers, possibly